

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4357

S E C R E T BUENOS AIRES 0704

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AR, US

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION THAT FOREIGN MINISTER QUIJANO BE INVITED
TO MEET WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER IN WASHINGTON

1. AT HIS REQUEST, I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER QUIJANO AT
9 A.M. THIS MORNING. QUIJANO SAID HE HAD NOTED LEAK IN YESTER-
DAY'S PRESS CONCERNING SECRETARY KISSINGER'S COMING VISIT TO LA.
IT HAD BEEN APPARENT TO ARGENTINES FOR SOME TIME THAT BUENOS
AIRES WOULD NOT BE INCLUDED; LEAK SIMPLY CONFIRMED IT. THIS
WAS, OF COURSE, SOURCE OF DISAPPOINTEMTN TO GOA.

2. I POINTED OUT, AS PER INSTRUCTIONS, THAT SECRETARY'S VISIT
WOULD BE OF BRIEF DURATION AND COULD ONLY INCLUDE A FEW
COUNTRIES. IT WOULD BE, HOWEVER, FIRST OF SEVERAL TRIPS HE
HOPED TO MAKE TO LA AND IT WAS TO BE EXPECTED THAT ARGENTINA
WOULD BE INCLUDED IN FUTURE TRIP.

3. QUIJANO SAID THIS IN ITSELF WOULD PROBABLY NOT ASSUAGE
ARGENTINA'S DISAPPOINTMENT. SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD EARLIER
REFERRED TO ARGENTINA AS A KEY COUNTRY AND HAD REPEATEDLY
INDICATED THAT BUENOS AIRES WOULD BE FIRST STOP. HOWEVER,
QUIJANO ADDED, HE IS A REALISTIC MAN AND PERFECTLY UNDERSTANDS
WHY THE SECRETARY IS NOT COMING TO ARGENTINA AT THIS TIME. THE
INTERNAL SITUATION, HE SUGGESTED, MIGHT HAVE CHANGED SINCE THE
SECRETARY FIRST MENTIONED HIS TRIP. HE UNDERSTOOD, HE SAID,
BUT THERE WOULD BE OTHERS WHO WOULD NOT AND THERE WOULD BE THOSE
WHO WOULD TRY TO USE SECRETARY'S FAILURE TO VISIT ARGENTINA TO

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DAMAGE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. WE MUST NOT ALLOW

THAT TO HAPPEN, QUIJANO ASSERTED. HIS IMMEDIATE CONCERN, THEREFORE, WAS TO MINIMIZE IMPACT OF ANNOUNCEMENT THAT ARGENTINA WOULD NOT BE INCLUDED. OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE ARE THE LONG-RANGE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. AS DIPLOMATS, HE SAID, WE MUST ASSURE THAT THE EPHEMERAL FACTORS WHICH PREVENT THE SECRETARY FROM VISITING BUENOS AIRES AT THIS TIME NOT BE ALLOWED TO DAMAGE THAT ONGOING, HARMONIOUS AND LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP.

4. QUIJANO SUGGESTED THAT ONE WAY TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACT OF SECRETARY'S FAILURE TO INCLUDE ARGENTINA WOULD BE FOR HIM (QUIJANO) TO MEET WITH THE SECRETARY IN WASHINGTON SHORTLY BEFORE LATTER'S DEPARTURE FOR LA. QUIJANO SAID HE PLANNED TO LEAVE FOR NEW YORK FEBRUARY 8 AND WOULD BE THERE FEBRUARY 9 - 15. IF SECRETARY KISSINGER BELIEVED IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO INVITE HIM TO COME DOWN TO WASHINGTON FOR A TALK DURING THAT PERIOD, HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO ACCEPT. PURPOSE OF MEETING, HE SUGGESTED, COULD BE DESCRIBED AS EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON MATTERS OF HEMISPHERIC AND BILATERAL INTEREST. THUS, MEETING COULD BE PROJECTED HERE WITHIN CONTEXT OF SECRETARY'S TRIP. LATTER WILL EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH SEVERAL GOVTS DURING TRIP AND WILL HAVE EXCHANGED VIEWS WITH ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE.

5. I TOLD FOREIGN MINISTER I WOULD REPORT OUR CONVERSATION IMMEDIATELY TO MY GOVT AND WOULD HOPE TO HAVE A REPLY FOR HIM BY END OF THE WEEK AT LATEST.

6. RECOMMENDATION: I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT QUIJANO'S SUGGESTION BE ACTED UPON AND THAT INVITATION BE ISSUED SOONEST TO MEET WITH SECRETARY IN WASHINGTON, HOPEFULLY AT A LUNCHEON IN HIS HONOR. I AGREE THAT THIS WOULD EASE CONSIDERABLY THE NEGATIVE REACTION HERE WHEN ANNOUNCEMENT IS MADE THAT SECRETARY WILL NOT VISIT ARGENTINA. MOREOVER, THERE IS ADDITIONAL MERIT TO MEETING AS FIRST OFFICIAL CONTACT BETWEEN SECRETARY AND NEW ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER (ALTHOUGH SECRETARY OF COURSE ALREADY KNOWS QUIJANO). QUIJANO REPRESENTS KIND OF MODERATE, EFFECTIVE FRIEND WITH WHOM, WHETHER HE BE FOREIGN MINISTER, IN OAS OR UN, WE CAN WORK TOWARD MUTUAL OBJECTIVES NO MATTER HOW ADVERSE THE CIRCUMSTANCES. HE IS GOOD MAN TO KEEP ON OUR SIDE.

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FURTHER, HE IS KNOWN AS APOLITICAL AND RESPECTED PROFESSIONAL. HENCE, ATTENTIONS PAID TO HIM WOULD BE SEEN AS INDICATING OUR CONTINUED FRIENDSHIP FOR AND INTEREST IN ARGENTINA, NOT FOR ANY ONE OF ITS POLITICAL FACTIONS.

7. URGE REPLY SOONEST. TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM IMPACT, INVITATION TO QUIJANO SHOULD PRECEDE, IF ONLY BY HOURS, OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF SECRETARY'S TRIP PLANS.

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